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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 161503
ORIGIN HA-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SIG-03 EA-12 IO-14 INSE-00 /035 R

DRAFTED BY HA/ORM:JBROH-KAHN:BA
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----------035906 240423Z /14
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY
AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY
USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: EXPEDITING MOVEMENT OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES TO U.S.

GENEVA, KUALA LUMPUR, BANGKOK, HONG KONG ALSO PASS ICEM
OFFICES

REF: BANGKOK 17776 (NOTAL)

1. REFTEL PARA 2 ASKED WHETHER VOLAGS WOULD BE ABLE TO MEET SATURDAY AND/OR SUNDAY FLIGHTS WITH REFUGEES ON BOARD IN ORDER TO SPEED UP MOVEMENT OF REFUGEES TO U.S. IN MEETINGS WITH VOLAGS JUNE 15 AND 21, HA/ORM OFFICER ASKED
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VOLAG OFFICERS WHETHER THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO MEET WEEKEND FLIGHTS. ON BOTH OCCASIONS VOLAG OFFICERS REPLIED THAT THEIR STAFFING WAS INADEQUATE TO DO SO.

2. SOME VOLAGS ALSO NOTED THAT ON SOME OCCASIONS REFUGEES HAD ARRIVED AT FINAL DESTINATION WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION TO LOCAL VOLAG. WE ASKED ICEM OFFICIAL AT VOLAG MEETING TO

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CHECK THIS OUT.

3. SOME VOLAGS ALSO COMPLAINED THAT IN SOME INSTANCES ONE OF THEM HAD TO GO TO NEW YORK AIRPORT ON FIVE SUCCESSIVE DAYS, EACH TIME TO MEET A SINGLE REFUGEE FAMILY. THEY

ASKED WHETHER BOOKINGS COULD BE CONCENTRATED SO THAT A NUMBER OF FAMILIES COULD ARRIVE ON ONE FLIGHT. WE NOTED THAT WE HAD INFORMATION THAT PARTICULARLY DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS IT WAS DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN ADEQUATE SPACE ON AIRLINES, WHICH MIGHT BE EXPLANATION FOR SPACING OUT OF ARRIVALS. NEVERTHELESS, WE UNDERTOOK TO ASK POSTS WHETHER GREATER EFFORTS COULD BE MADE TO CONCENTRATE ARRIVALS ON AS FEW FLIGHTS AS POSSIBLE.

4. ALL VOLAGS ALSO MENTIONED THAT IN MANY INSTANCES ARRIVAL NOTIFICATIONS WERE RECEIVED ONLY TWO OR THREE DAYS BEFORE REFUGEES ARRIVED AT THEIR FINAL DESTINATIONS. THIS MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR SPONSORS TO RENT LODGINGS AND MAKE OTHER FINAL PREPARATIONS AT LAST MINUTE. VOLAGS ASKED WHETHER THEY COULD GET ABOUT TEN DAYS ADVANCE NOTIFICATION. SUGGESTION WAS MADE THAT AT TIME POSTS SENT INSTRUCTIONS TO CAMPS TO BRING REFUGEES TO TRANSIT CENTERS FOR FINAL PROCESSING JVR AT POSTS COULD CABLE VOLAGS PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION WHICH WOULD THEN BE FOLLOWED BY FINAL NOTIFICATION BY ICEM WHEN FLIGHTS WERE ACTUALLY
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BOOKED. WOULD APPRECIATE POST VIEWS ON WHETHER SUCH PRELIMINARY NOTIFICATION OF INTENDED MOVEMENT WOULD BE FEASIBLE.

5. FINALLY, VOLAGS NOTED THAT IN SOME INSTANCES THEY HAVE PROVIDED SPONSORSHIP ASSURANCES ONLY TO BE TOLD SUBSEQUENTLY THAT REFUGEES WERE ON MEDICAL HOLD. SPONSORS THEN OFTEN HAD TO WAIT FOR SOME TIME UNTIL MEDICAL RELEASES WERE OBTAINED. TO OBVIATE THIS PROBLEM, SUGGESTION WAS MADE THAT AS SOON AS INS APPROVED REFUGEE AND BIODATA MAILED TO VOLAGS, POSTS SHOULD ATTEMPT TO INITIATE PRELIMINARY MEDICAL SCREENING IN CONNECTION WITH EFFORTS WE UNDERSTAND ARE NOW BEING MADE TO GIVE MEDICAL EXAMS IN CAMPS RATHER THAN IN TRANSIT CENTER. IF PRELIMINARY MEDICAL SCREENING INDICATED REFUGEE MIGHT HAVE TO BE PUT ON MEDICAL HOLD, POST COULD THEN CABLE VOLAGS TO DELAY SPONSORSHIP SEARCH UNTIL MEDICAL PROBLEM CLEARED UP.

6. WOULD APPRECIATE POST VIEWS ON WHETHER SUCH PRELIMINARY MEDICAL SCREENING AND NOTIFICATION OF VOLAGS WOULD BE FEASIBLE, SINCE THIS WOULD ALLOW VOLAGS TO CONCENTRATE SPONSORSHIP SEARCH ON REFUGEES WHO WOULD BE READILY AVAIL-

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ABLE FOR MOVEMENT RATHER THAN ON THOSE WHO MIGHT HAVE TO
REMAIN IN CAMPS FOR SOME TIME. VANCE

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